

The following story appeared in the [Chicago Sun-Times](#) on April, 7, 2010.

by Thomas Frisbee

Mike Quigley, the Chicago congressman who won Rahm Emanuel's old seat in a special election, today celebrated his first year in office as the representative of Illinois' Fifth District.

Seniority plays a big role on the Hill, and already Quigley has moved up 10 spots to No. 425 because of various resignations. Not that he's counting.

Looking back a year, Quigley says it was something of a culture shock to be sworn in and suddenly find himself voting on legislation he hadn't had time to read up on.

"It's something akin to one of two things: Being parachuted into the middle of a firefight or being transferred in your senior year in high school and having to meet 434 new kids," he said.

One thing Quigley said he has learned is that the Hill is all about relationships.

"To get anything done or to learn what's happening, the relationship you have with the chairman of committees, for example, is vital," he said. "Your staff is vital. The institutional memory is vital."

And even the most avid new U.S. representative is going to be awed by the new job, he added.

"There's a 'gee whiz' quality ... sort of Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," Quigley said. "I promise you there is that feeling. You walk under the dome, you go to the White House. I was on Air Force One - once. It's striking."